

## The Knowledge Bank at The Ohio State University

### Ohio State Engineer

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You see, Freddie needed a thousand pounds to start his bookmaking business, not the kind of bookmaking that involves a printing press, but an attempt to get back the five hundred pounds he'd already lost on the races. That, of course, was only a means to the more important end of marrying Eve. His father, that amiable and boneheaded peer, the Earl of Emsworth, absolutely refused to pay any more of his gambling debts. So Freddie approached his Uncle Joe Kebble. Now it happened that Uncle Joe had privy need of his own for some three thousand pounds to help a runaway daughter, but was unable to draw the money on account of a joint checking account of which Lady Constance had cleverly managed to retain the control during one of Joe's more susceptible moments. Besides, Lady Constance had the pearl necklace, worth some twenty odd thou. Then Freddie had the great inspiration. Joe was to steal his wife's necklace, for which she would allow him to draw a check on their joint account to replace the necklace. Joe was then to return her own necklace to her and be some twenty odd thou. to the good. Freddie would get his thousand for the bookmaking business and the runaway daughter would get her share. Fine business, but Joe got cold feet. He offered to double Freddie's share of the spoils if he would do the dirty work. And then Freddie saw an advertisement on the front page of the morning paper that to his movie trained eyes looked like the real thing.

"LEAVE IT TO PSMITH!

DO YOU WANT

Someone to manage your affairs?  
Someone to take your dog out for a run?  
Someone to assassinate your aunt?

LEAVE IT TO PSMITH!"

And so Freddie leaves it to Psmith to steal Auntie's necklace. How Psmith does it and what else he steals is Wodehouse's own story and told in his inimitable bombastic way. Reading Wodehouse is like cruising the Atlantic in a canoe—you read along for two or three pages and begin to think, "My, what a tame story this is turning out to be." Then he jabs your funny-bone and you keep chuckling for the next five pages. The setting is ideal,—lemon colored pajamas and a stately pigeon-toed butler set in an old Castle that droops like a wet sock. If you want 347 pages of good wholesome giggles try P. G. Wodehouse's "Leave It To Psmith." Doran publishes it and if your favorite library doesn't have it you can buy it at any bookstore for two dollars.

Do you like a real, honest-to-goodness blood curdling story? If you do try a little volume entitled "The Seven That Were Hanged." It's written by a Russian, Andre-yev, and is the story of seven people who were condemned to be hanged, and their behavior during the interval between the time they are condemned and the time of their execution. As a serious psychological study it is excellent; as a story it is gruesomely fascinating. One involuntarily pauses to wonder if Leopold and Loeb read this before playing their little joke. In the same volume with "The Seven That Were Hanged" is another story, "The Red Laugh." It is a less serious

psychological study, but even more ghastly in depicting the horrors of the war between Russia and Japan in 1904. As the author is talking to a comrade a shell passes over his shoulder and pierces his comrade in the face, leaving a gaping hole. To his already fleeing senses this seems to symbolize to him the "Red Laugh" of the whole beastly business of war. It's a shuddery thing to read but well worth while if the type sounds interesting. You'll find it in the "Modern Library" edition, price ninety-five cents.

You should get acquainted with this "Modern Library." Boni and Liveright, erstwhile famous for the publication of books once suppressed by the New York Vice Commission, publishes over 120 volumes of the works of outstanding modern writers in pocket size (4 1/4" x 6 1/2") at the very reasonable price of ninety-five cents per volume. The binding is a good quality imitation leather, the paper is good and the type large. One can scarcely go wrong in picking titles from this set. For instance there is "Candide," a choice bit of satire in which Voltaire delicately thumbs his nose at the Presbyterian idea that all things are ordained for the best.

You may wonder what business a book of poetry has in an Engineering magazine. We're not even going to try to prove what business it has here—probably couldn't in fact,—but if you like clean rhythm, singing beauty and surging emotions molded into black type, try Edna St. Vincent Milley's "Renascence." It's a thin little book, probably only half an hour's straight reading but endless hours of comfort—if you like that sort of thing. We did. It costs two dollars and is worth it.

### THE BOOKSHELF SPEAKS

We recommend in this issue the department titled "The Bookshelf Speaks." We used to call it the "Bookshelf." We changed the title a little bit, and the contents a whole lot more. We will try to keep you all posted on the good current books, and occasionally suggest some of the old ones that are by no means bad. You will like it, we hope, and can profit by it.

There is an article in the May, 1918, issue of the *Atlantic Monthly* that ought to be of particular interest to Engineers. It's called "Science in the Humanities," and is written by Elwood Hendrick. Don't be frightened by that title, it's not one of those sugary up-lift messages (doncha hatem!) but just straight facts that make mighty easy reading. We liked it, perhaps because we agreed with Hendrick, but at that, perhaps you'll like it, too. It's in our own library; just make our your call slip for Vol. 121, and turn to page 656.

Do you browse around in our library much? It's great fun. We got a real thrill last week in cutting some pages in an old volume printed around the middle of the 17th century. How many people had handled that book no one will ever know, but there were two pages, 300 years old, that no prying eyes had ever before "scrunitized" (to quote Vic Donahey). All the

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### THE BOOKSHELF SPEAKS

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excitement of discovering a new planet right in your own front yard!

Has a Bookshelf any right to talk about plays and movies? Probably not, you'll say, but in this age of publicity that only gives us more freedom to tell you about a few that impressed us. For instance,—“Simon Called Peter”! A large portion of the crowd had read the book from which it was taken (pretty punk) and came expecting to be shocked but were disappointed to find the subject handled much more delicately on the stage than in the book. Of the movies, we recommend “The Thief of Bagdad.” To the hardened movie-hound, this is something different; to the grownup who still has a spark of imagination left it is eminently refreshing.

Don't you like those little gesticulating books at the top of this column? We didn't know what sort of a “capital” our architect friend would turn out, but after it was done we decided that it fits especially well. Can't you just see that scampering upper lefthand figure shouting at the top of his voice, “Hola, hola, eureka, I found it!” and then see him breathlessly crouching with his hand held up for silence,—“Listen, while I tell you what I found.”

And that's what we're going to try to do.